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SUNDAY.....JANUARY 31, 1897.

THIS PAPER RECEIVES THE COMBINED TELEGRAPHIC-NEWS SERVICE OF THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATED PRESS, THE UNITED PRESS, THE WESTERN ASSOCIATED PRESS, THE NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATED PRESS, AND THE ASSOCIATED PRESS OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

THE NICARAGUA CANAL.

The Freylinghuysen treaty, which has been injected into the discussions of the Nicaragua canal bill and the arbitration treaty between Great Britain and this country, and which on Wednesday is to be Secretary-of-State Sherman threatened to revive, with the result that Senator Aldrich jumped on him with fire in his eyes and sarcasm in his words, dates back to 1851. It was negotiated between Secretary-of-State Freylinghuysen and Mr. Josephine Zavalas, an envoy sent out from Nicaragua that purpose at the request of Mr. Freylinghuysen, and embodied the policy of President Arthur regarding the Nicaragua canal. Under it the United States were to build, operate, and have exclusive control of the canal, and Nicaragua was to grant us in fee simple a strip of land all along the route. In return the United States were to loan Nicaragua \$4,000,000, engage to protect her in the possession of her lawful territory, and, finally, to give her a joint ownership of the canal, together with one-third of its net revenues. It was when this treaty was negotiated, or being negotiated, that Mr. Freylinghuysen declared that the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was inoperative, because Great Britain had repeatedly violated it. Nicaragua ratified the treaty, but it hung fire in the United States Senate. It being a question in the minds of many senators whether or not the treaty would not provoke trouble with Great Britain touching the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, and others thinking that it came too near assuming a protectorate over Nicaragua. It went over as a legacy to Mr. Cleveland's first administration, by which it was withdrawn.

The pending Nicaragua canal bill which has been so vigorously championed by Senator Morgan, of Alabama, and so vigorously criticized by Senator Daniel, and which provoked the protest of the minister of the Greater Republic of Central America, is a Senate bill to amend the act of February, 1853, incorporating the Maritime Canal Company, of Nicaragua. It provides, among other things, for the issuance of \$100,000,000 of bonds to be guaranteed by the United States, the proceeds to be applied to the construction of the canal. The whole organization of the company is to be changed, and the corporation is to be managed in future by a board of eleven directors, eight of whom are to be appointed by the President of the United States, by and with the advice of the Senate. The directors are to elect a president, vice-president, secretary, assistant secretary, and treasurer, who are to get \$5,000 a year each and traveling expenses. The United States is to receive 70 per cent of the stock of the company, and Nicaragua is to get "in shares, bonds, certificates, or other securities which the company may issue to raise the corporate capital, 6 per cent of the total amount of the issue"—that is, \$5,500,000 in securities, as against the \$100,000,000 in cash provided for under the Freylinghuysen treaty. At the same time Nicaragua is not guaranteed, the Minister of the Greater Republic claims, certain other advantages that would have accrued to her under the Freylinghuysen agreement. This would seem to account in large measure for Minister Rodriguez's protest, although some of the opponents of the arbitration treaty contend that said protest was made solely in the interest of, and at the instigation of Great Britain, in order that the latter, failing to get a recognition of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, might bring up the canal question, under the arbitration agreement.

Without going into the merits of the present bill we reiterate what we have frequently said. That is, that the Nicaragua canal ought to be built, and built as an American enterprise exclusively. Moreover, we believe that sooner or later it will be constructed, and that when constructed, it will be controlled by the United States.

THE NEGRO IN SOCIETY.

The race question is to the fore again, both in Massachusetts and West Virginia. In West Virginia, one Christopher Columbus Payne, who is a member of the House of Delegates, from Fayette county, is the cause of the trouble. In Massachusetts, the Hon. Isaac B. Allen, a member of the Governor's Council, is the "census bell."

Night before last a ball was given to the Legislature in the State-House at Charleston, W. Va. The Committee of Arrangements refused to send an invitation to Payne. They did not wish Payne to be present, and, accordingly, declined to enter his name upon the list of persons to whom invitations were to be sent. Payne became very angry and indignant at this, we may presume, inasmuch as a number of his political friends refused to attend the ball, because of the "slight" put upon him.

However, the ball went on, all the same, and was very enjoyable, we have no doubt. But some of the Republicans are making a great howl over the "slight" to Payne. We suppose that they have a constitutional right to howl, and we hope that no one will attempt to stop them. The only other thing that they can do is to have another ball, to which Payne shall be invited, and the society folk shall be "out."

This count to even, we think. Governor MacCorkle is to give a reception to his successor in office, Governor Atkinson, to-morrow night, and it is conjectured that another "slight" will then be put upon Chris. Payne.

The trouble in Massachusetts is that the Hon. Isaac B. Allen wishes to accompany the Governor and staff and councillors to Nashville during the Tennessee Exposition. Very naturally, his company is not desired. The way it is proposed to get rid of him is that the Legislature shall make provision only for the expenses of four members of the council, to be selected by the Governor; and it seems quite certain that Allen will not be one of these four. But Allen claims the right to go. He claims it, of course, because he is a negro. If he were a white man he could not claim the right.

Allen is very loud-mouthed in the assertion of his so-called "rights," and is appealing to party prejudice to see that he is allowed to go where he is not wanted as a social ornament, and where no official duties call him.

We do not know what will be the result of the squabble. Nor do we know whether the Nashville hotel, at which the Governor's party propose to stop, would entertain Allen. We suppose not, certainly not, unless the proprietors are willing to entertain negroes regularly thereafter.

It has never occurred to Payne, in West Virginia, nor to Allen, in Massachusetts, that they are seeking to enter into social realms where they are not wanted. Delicacy of feeling is unknown to them, and, thus, instead of doing their race good by their silly assertions, they are doing it harm.

Neither at the North nor at the South is the negro welcome in the society of white people. And this he ought to know. Whenever an attempt is made by him to take advantage of an official position to thrust himself where his individual standing would not entitle him to go, he does himself and his race harm. We always regret to see these exhibitions of ignorance, and want of self-respect. The prominence that such men as Allen and Payne give themselves cannot but distress thoughtful and respectable colored people.

The opponents of negro education could not possibly have furnished ready to hand so effective a weapon as comes to them in the conduct of the Allens and Paynes. It is, therefore, to the interest of the mass of colored people to frown down upon and utterly disown all sympathy with those members of their race who will insist upon thrusting themselves into company where they are not wanted.

# RICHMOND THE PLACE.

The Lynchburg News, in commenting on General Gordon's order, changing the date of the annual reunion of the United Confederate Veterans, and especially upon his reference to the location of which will be discussed at the reunion, has this to say:

"Five cities are contending for this honor. The Confederate relics and trophies and memorials is there. And this crowning memorial of all ought, also, to be there. Richmond then, the great center of the Confederate struggle, will become the great center of the reunion, and honor for the surviving veterans, and their descendants through the ages to come."

Unquestionably, Richmond is the place for the proposed great memorial, and no amount of argument to the contrary could break the force of the News's contention.

Since 1859 the Bulletin has advocated a State convention to frame a new constitution for Virginia. We still believe that it should be called. For a few months, however, we have doubted whether 1897 was a proper time to vote on a question of such grave importance, because no political party seemed to have just now and we fear that the parties—Democratic, Republican, and Populist—would so split up as to elect a sufficient number of malcontents, who are too good for either party, and too wise in their estimation—to listen to the cries for relief by the people, to hold the balance of power, and that any constitution framed would be a compromise measure, making the proposed new constitution by a plurality of the vote.

Under one, now in force. But, as the question of calling the convention is the only one to be voted on in May—the ordering of the election of delegates being left to the Legislature—we are of the opinion that all our people from now till election-day should work to carry the call.—Henry County Bulletin.

If the people order the convention, we doubt not that an effort will be made to have a special session of the Legislature, so that members of the convention may be elected in November next.

The desirability of having a constitutional convention at this time, are entertained by thousands of other thoughtful and patriotic Democrats.

A convention called now would be of very uncertain character; whereas, we should have it made up of our very best material. Let us amend our Constitution by a plebiscite, and gradually perfect it; rather than risk another Underwood Constitution.—The Bedford Democrat.

Yes; yes; it is the doubt as to what manner of convention we should have, if we call it now, that must give us pause.

Under the present Constitution of the State of New York it is made unlawful to employ convicts in any work other than that of producing supplies for the State, or for the political divisions thereof. A few of the prisoners are now employed in manufacturing such articles as may be needed in the asylums and prisons of the State, but the great majority of them are idle. In consequence of this idleness, some cases of suicide, and many of dementia have occurred. There is now a general popular demand that the prisoners be given some employment—employment in which their labor will not conflict with the labor of honest men, inasmuch as it is possible to find such. It has been suggested, accordingly, that the convicts be put to building public roads; but on that proposition the New York Times has this to say:

"Among the suggestions of the Prison Commission in regard to the employment of convicts, is one to the effect that their labor could be used in the construction of reformatories. This would involve the subsistence of prisoners away from the prisons, and under close guard, except while the work was confined to the vicinity of the institution. It is suggested that the gangs employed on the public highways is not a pleasing or edifying one, and this mode of employment is not conducive to the kind of discipline that is supposed to be necessary. Assuming that the work upon the roads ought to be done at the State's expense, it is a question whether it would not cost more if done by prison labor, under guard, than if done by free labor. There are serious objections to this mode of using convict labor, and it is considered only because the Constitution of this State most unwisely compels a resort to all sorts of expedients by prohibiting the sale of products of prison industry. The effect of the new policy will inevitably be one of loss and expense, but its worst consequences will appear in the lagging of reformatory discipline which comes from a systematic industry that can be continued after leaving prison. Ex-convicts cannot find occupation in making blades for razors, or in sewing the clothes of lunatics, or even in 'working on the road,' and they will not be allowed to acquire trades or become expert in any mechanical industry."

If it should be admitted that convicts might be advantageously employed in Virginia in the making of roads, where are we to get the convicts? They could not be gotten from the penitentiary without taking them from the contractors. And if they were taken from the contractors in violation of the agreement, how could the State reimburse itself for the hires it would thus lose?

This question has been time and again exhaustively considered by the Legislature, and the conclusion has always been reached by an overwhelming majority that for the present Virginia can do no better than she is now doing. It may be that by the time of the expiration of the present contracts the State may be able to make some better arrangement than it now has for the employment of its prison labor. We earnestly hope that it may; but we have to remember that so far from consenting to the State's giving up the large sum of money now received from hires, the majority of the members of the Legislature have always refused to sacrifice the Capitol Square. Though this is the most effective and conspicuous form in which prison labor is made to compete with honest labor, we regret to say the Legislature has over and over again refused to make a change.

Now, unless the State is willing to give up the greater part of the \$200,000 of hires which it is receiving from contractors, it ought to provide decent cells in the penitentiary for the men who must be kept there. The women have excellent quarters, but the men are horribly crowded. So far as we know there is not within the length and breadth of all our land a prison building so badly crowded as ours. And remember that the men not only have to eat in these cells, but are locked in them from sunset to sunrise.

Nothing can be accomplished by the agitation of the question of working convicts on the roads except to divert public attention from the duty of the State to provide means of reform for the penitentiary. Everybody knows that "hard run" as the State now is, it will not think of giving up the larger portion of the \$200,000 per annum it is receiving annually from the hires of convicts.

BANKING REFORM.

Chairman Walker, of the House Committee on Banking and Currency, says that committee has in its possession ample facts regarding the old State bank system prior to 1850, and the national banking system since that time. Also that the object of the committee will be to frame a national system that will be as liberal as that of the old State banks, and yet secure the noteholder as thoroughly as he is now secured. From this we are led to infer that Mr. Walker is still wedded to a national banking system, and that any reform bill the committee may report will be based upon that system.

Here the committee will find themselves at odds with a large element, who contend that the government should be entirely divorced from banking. However, if Mr. Walker and his committee can succeed in giving us a system with the features he has indicated, and at the same time, safeguard the currency issue from sudden contraction, the country would doubtless be willing to compromise on it.

Reform embracing the liberality of the old State bank system, including its elastic currency feature, and the protection to the note-holder of the national bank system, is what both the business and agricultural interests of the country demand. However, strong may be the argument against having a national string attached to a system of this character, and, however sound may be a general financial principle the contention that government and banking should be absolutely dissociated, the proposed change, reform, or remodelling should be an infinite improvement upon the present system.

The Cuban Junta in this country vehemently declares that the reforms to be offered Cuba by Spain will not be accepted by the Cubans. According, however, to a speech made in Washington, it is a case of the wish being father to the thought. Acceptance of the reforms would mean a loss of prestige and large salaries to the insurgents' representatives here, who have been liberally supported by contributions from Cuban sympathizers. Furthermore, the statements of the members of the junta anent this matter do not amount to much, seeing that the only men that will be treated with touching the reforms are the Cuban leaders in the field. The junta, it is asserted, has no authority to say what the insurgents would or would not do.

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## THE AMBULANCE OUTFIT.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

Sir,—Since this subject has been brought so repeatedly before the public, justice to myself demands a statement of facts.

In April, 1896, I was appointed by the Virginia Medical College one of the resident physicians at the City Almshouse, and confirmed as such by the Committee on Relief of Poor. The city alms house, in addition to lodging for board, of which \$15 is paid Mr. Davis, the remaining \$5 defraying incidentals, as laundry, etc. Evidently, then, this salary could not be the inducement which was offered for one year's arduous work, which entailed a great deal of resident physician, druggist, and ambulance surgeon.

Having to encounter, in the discharge of the above duties, the crowded inmates, the attempted suicides, and many sick in the lowest haunts of vice, I don't think any reasonable person would say that the clothes worn on such occasions would be the ones in which they would welcome me. I consider them improper wearing apparel to associate with my friends and family; therefore, they are worn only when on ambulance or hospital duty.

I provided for myself in the above offices, for self-preservation, when first appointed, and as often after as occasion demanded, as the following itemized account will show:

Sweater (cost at night), 75 cents; gaiters, \$1.50; overcoat, \$15; Mackintosh, \$5.00; rubbers, \$1; suit, \$7.50. Total, \$32.25.

All the above articles will be left at the City Almshouse when I am appointed. The City Almshouse, for a number of years past \$25 had been allowed each resident physician for an outfit, I had no hesitancy in accepting this sum, when it was appropriated unanimously by the committee on Relief of Poor on Mr. Walker's motion; but I defy any member of the committee, or any councilman, or any one else, to say I ever approached him in any manner whatsoever in reference to securing any appropriation.

When the money was turned over to me, Mr. Davis asked us to get receipts to the amount of \$5 each as vouchers, which was done. As the charges being made services rendered on ambulance, I pronounce such a falsehood of the deepest dye. I accepted the appointment for the experience to be gained, as a training-school for my profession, and, while I was there, there, not as a rich man, yet, thank God, it was not as a pauper, to beg the city of Richmond for any one for a pitiful, but "dear," \$25.

W. H. LYNE, JR., M. D.

## Our Coast and Harbor Defence.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

The Coast and Harbor Defence and Improvement Convention met at Tampa, Fla., last week with representatives from every State on the Gulf Coast, and Atlantic seaboard, except Virginia. I was very sorry to not be there, as the object of the convention was to discuss plans for the protection of our seacoast, and especially those States wherein are located works of the United States.

We should certainly have had a representative there, as our capes (Charles and Henry) form the gateway to one of the most important series of water-courses on this coast, and one of the finest harbors in the world.

Then, again, as to the naval militia, which is so highly recommended by Secretary Herbert in his last annual report, we are entirely without representation. North Carolina has a well-equipped battalion of 162 men, with the old monitor Nautekett stationed at New Bern for an armory. South Carolina, a battalion of 165 men, with the old monitor Albatross stationed at Charleston. Georgia, two companies (eighty-eight men), with the monitor Passaic stationed at Brunswick for headquarters. Louisiana, a battalion of 200 men, with headquarters at New Orleans, and Maryland, a battalion of 197 men, with the United States steamship Dale, stationed at Baltimore, for headquarters.

So much for our Southern States. The Northern States, those on the Great Lakes show a still larger force of naval militia.

No doubt the above facts were fully brought out and discussed at the convention, and our lack of representation noted. Respectfully,

JAMES M. GENTRY.

## Sorry for Yost.

(Rockingham Register.)

The Register feels sorry for its friend, Yost. With a candidate like that is it Re- Jake Yost. With a candidate like that is it Re- Jake Yost. With a candidate like that is it Re- Jake Yost.

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